



RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Municipal Police Training Academy

Community College of Rhode Island — Flanagan Campus

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Colonel James M. Manni
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police
Director, Department of Public Safety

Lieutenant Christopher J. Zarrella
Executive Director
Municipal Police Training Academy

Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training

Meeting Minutes

June 8, 2020 (via zoom meeting)

1. Welcome and Roll Call

Chief Mello called to order the regular meeting of the Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training (POST) at 10:02 a.m. on **June 8, 2020**.

Chief Mello took a roll call. The following POST members were present at the zoom meeting: Chief Mello, Colonel Michael Winquist, Maria Deaton and Mr. Shawn Brown. Absent is Colonel Clements. Also present were Lieutenant Christopher Zarrella, David Ricciarelli, Donna Lavallee; Captain Derek Borek; Ryan Holt; Adam Sholes, Captain Michael Chalek, URI, and Paul Dutra, RI Interlocal Trust.

2. Discussion/Approval of minutes:

Chief Mello stated that in a review of the February 26, 2020 minutes there was an error under Item 2. It states he asked for the motion but he was absent. Should have been Colonel Clements. He asked Donna Lavallee to make the change. He then asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the POST Meeting of February 26, 2020. Shawn Brown made a motion to accept the minutes ; Colonel Winquist seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

****Colonel Clements has now joined the meeting at 10:05 am**

3. Request for approval of Firearms Qualifications Courses

- Barrington Police Department
- Burrillville Police Department
- Coventry Police Department
- North Smithfield Police Department
- Warwick Police Department

Lieutenant Zarrella stated that all courses have been reviewed by Captain Gould and he is recommending approval on all.

Maria Deaton made a motion to approve all Firearms put before them; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 5-0, motion carries.

4. Certification of Instructors

- Off. Joseph Ferle, Narragansett PD - Patrol Operations Instructor
- Officer Chad Specht, Jamestown PD - Patrol Operations Instructor
- Officer Christopher Sarasin, S. Kingstown PD-Patrol Operations Instructor
- Officer Stephen Rodrigues, E. Providence PD - Patrol Operations Instructor

Lt. Zarrella stated all four instructors have been Class Training Officer's and are seasoned officers. They were all part of the Patrol Operations classes and have worked with Corporal Kris Lagor and he highly recommends all of them to the role of instructor.

Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve all above instructors ; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 5-0, motion carries.

5. Update on Class 2020-II

Lt. Zarrella stated that we are operating under the Governor's current restrictions (social distancing, number of people in one area, etc.). To stay in compliance with these restrictions, we need cut the recruits down in the July class. We do not have the resources to bring 50+ in at a time. Lieutenant Zarrella stated that after speaking with the staff, he is recommending give seats to 60% of each department who are requesting more than 3 seats. This would put us at 40. The schedule has been built around four groups of 10. They will move through the Academy interacting only with the other 9 in their group. The only shared space will be when they are in the classroom and even then, they would be split into two groups. He further stated that any block of instruction that involves a test would remain the a classroom session. The instruction might be done via zoom. Virtual classes will run very much like actual classrooms. We are asking they attend these virtual classes at their respective departments. Presentation only classes will be sent to the recruits and they will have to sign off that they have completed the material required. There will be approximately 80 hours of virtual or presentation.

Chief Mello asked if the classes will be shortened. Lt. Zarrella replied that this will be a 15-week Academy. With the smaller groups, they have found that the course work moves more quickly and has demonstrated a propensity of acquiring information more rapidly. Chief Mello asked if it will be 60% across the board. Lt. Zarrella replied yes, to those departments requesting more than 3 seats. So for an example, Warwick requested 10 but 1 is a waiver so we would take 6 and the waiver. Chief Mello asked with a 15-week schedule, does he anticipate running two cycles or waiting for the next class to begin in January. Lt. Zarrella replied that it is our hope to assess the 2020-II class. If it is successful, we anticipate three weeks down time and start another Academy ASAP.

Chief Mello added that based on that, the next class could graduate in February or so. So agencies that are not going to be able to get all of their recruits in this class, the next class would be sooner than having to wait until January. Lt. Zarrella added that any departments who could not get all their seats for this class will get the 1st seats in the next. Chief Mello stated we have talked about this happening for four years now. Colonel Winquist asked if the departments would have to do additional training with the shortening of the schedule. Lt. Zarrella stated he has talked to Paul Dutra at length during the last Academy about the curriculum. The short answer is no, all the vital courses will remain a constant

in this Academy. He does suggest having to reinforce the FTO's that the classes were shortened. Paul Dutra agreed that it sound like a sound plan.

Chief Mello made a motion to support the plan put forward by Lt. Zarrella to accept 60% of the seat requests from all departments who are requesting more than 3 seats; Colonel Winquist seconded the motion. With all in favor, 5-0, motion carries.

Lt. Zarrella added that obviously, everything can change depending on COVID. That is why the visual platform is so important because it allows us to take on hurdles as they come. Chief Mello thanked all the staff the work and effort put into the last class. Lt. Zarrella replied thanking the POST members for all their assistance.

6. Discussion of Appeal Process (General Order 6.400)

Lieutenant Zarrella explained that we have had some challenging test takers in recent Academies and has revised the policy. Chief Mello stated that he personally feels that this is a sensitive and an important policy and feels it is in need of a face-to-face meeting. This policy speaks to who we are certifying as police officers and is not a simple policy. It is complex and in need of a very important part of discussion. He asked if the members are comfortable to tabling this for a month or so.

Lt. Zarrella asked that when they review it again, to please consider under Subsection "N", Item #3, whether the POST will consider to allow recruits to remain in the Academy, finish and not graduate? Or stick with how it reads, which is send them home and come back to the next Academy where that instruction starts up. Chief Mello stated that the next schedule may not accommodate that and it depends on the nature of what the course is as well. Lt. Zarrella added that the two classes that most recruits fail is Use of Force and Firearms. Use of Force consists of six weeks of remedial. He is all for tabling this and re-visiting it. Chief Mello added that he would like to see it adopted before any chances of failure in this next class. He then polled all members and all agreed to table until a face to face meeting. Colonel Clements made a motion to table this agenda item until they could meet for a face to face meeting; Mr. Brown seconded the motion. With all in favor, 5-0, motion carries.

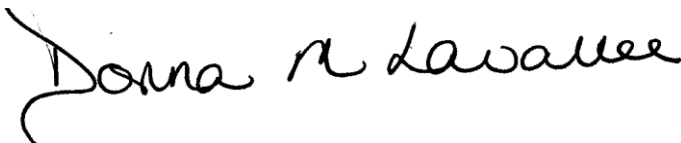
Chief Mello then asked Donna to please contact him in about three weeks to see the status of scheduling a face to face meeting.

Chief Mello asked if anyone present at the meeting had anything to address to the POST. None had any comments or additional business.

7. Adjournment:

Chief Mello asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maria Deaton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 am and Colonel Clements seconded the motion. With all in favor, 5-0, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna M. Lavalley
Administrative Assistant